

you for standing for what's right. Thank you for helping the liberated. And thank you for working for peace.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

### **Proclamation 8138—National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, 2007**

*May 1, 2007*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month is an opportunity to educate Americans about the importance of healthy habits and regular physical activity. During this annual observance, we renew our commitment to helping keep our citizens physically active, and we recognize the value of incorporating exercise and sports into our daily lives.

Regular physical activity is vital to good health. By maintaining an active lifestyle, citizens can reduce their risk of developing chronic health conditions. Participating in outdoor activities and individual or team sports helps promote physical fitness. These activities also teach young people important life lessons, including teamwork, patience, and discipline.

My Administration is committed to helping ensure the good health of all Americans. This year is the fifth anniversary of the HealthierUS initiative, which helps Americans improve their personal health and fitness and prevent disease. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is spreading the message that a healthy America is a country that is physically active. Additionally, this year the Department of Health and Human Services and its partners launched a public awareness campaign to promote exercise and eating well to America's youth. This campaign encourages kids to "Be a Player: Get Up and Play an Hour a Day." To find out other ways to improve health, Americans can visit [fitness.gov](http://fitness.gov) or

[presidentschallenge.org](http://presidentschallenge.org). By making physical fitness a priority, our citizens can help prevent disease and live healthier lives.

**Now, Therefore I, George W. Bush**, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2007 as National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. I call upon my fellow citizens to participate in athletic activities and make physical fitness a priority in their lives. I also encourage individuals, schools, and communities to celebrate this month with appropriate activities and programs.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

### **Proclamation 8139—Older Americans Month, 2007**

*May 1, 2007*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

During Older Americans Month, we pay tribute to our senior citizens for the many ways they strengthen our Nation. Our country is blessed by their compassionate acts, the wisdom of their experiences, and the patriotism they demonstrate.

This year's theme, "Older Americans: Making Choices for a Healthier Future," underscores the importance of making informed decisions regarding lifestyle and personal health. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports encourages seniors to engage in physical activity through a program called the President's Challenge. By recognizing the importance of staying active, in conjunction with nutritious eating and proper medical care, older Americans can

improve heart health, slow bone loss, and lengthen lives. By making an effort to enhance their quality of life, older Americans inspire younger generations to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

My Administration is working to modernize the Medicare system and provide better prescription drug coverage and health care so seniors have more choices and improved care. This year, I proposed a standard tax deduction for those who purchase private health insurance. The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 and the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, Medicare Part D, help seniors receive the medical services and the prescription drugs they need at more affordable prices.

This month, we honor older Americans for demonstrating the spirit of our Nation through their positive attitude, strong work ethic, and personal character. America will always be grateful for the legacy of responsibility and service they are leaving to future generations.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2007 as Older Americans Month. I commend older Americans for the many contributions they make to our Nation. I also commend the Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations, service and health care providers, caregivers, and volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to our seniors. I encourage all citizens to honor their elders, care for those in need, and reaffirm our country's commitment to older Americans this month and throughout the year.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:54 a.m., May 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

**Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007"**

*May 1, 2007*

Good evening. Twelve weeks ago, I asked the Congress to pass an emergency war spending bill that would provide our brave men and women in uniform with the funds and flexibility they need. Instead, Members of the House and the Senate passed a bill that substitutes the opinions of politicians for the judgment of our military commanders. So a few minutes ago, I vetoed the bill.

Tonight I will explain the reasons for this veto and my desire to work with Congress to resolve this matter as quickly as possible. We can begin tomorrow with a bipartisan meeting with the congressional leaders here at the White House.

Here is why the bill Congress passed is unacceptable. First, the bill would mandate a rigid and artificial deadline for American troops to begin withdrawing from Iraq. That withdrawal could start as early as July 1st, and it would have to start no later than October 1st, regardless of the situation on the ground.

It makes no sense to tell the enemy when you plan to start withdrawing. All the terrorists would have to do is mark their calendars and gather their strength and begin plotting how to overthrow the Government and take control of the country of Iraq. I believe setting a deadline for withdrawal would demoralize the Iraqi people, would encourage killers across the broader Middle East, and send a signal that America will not keep its commitments. Setting a deadline for withdrawal is setting a date for failure, and that would be irresponsible.

Second, the bill would impose impossible conditions on our commanders in combat. After forcing most of our troops to withdraw, the bill would dictate the terms on which the remaining commanders and troops could engage the enemy. That means American commanders in the middle of a combat zone would have to take fighting directions from